



ANITA M. BOCK
Director

County of Los Angeles

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

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Board of Supervisors

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August 29, 2001

TO: Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich
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Supervisor Don Knabe

FROM:  Anita M. Bock, Director

INTENT TO NEGOTIATE SOLE SOURCE CONTRACT WITH WALTER R. MCDONALD AND ASSOCIATES OF SACRAMENTO

This is in accordance with your Board's motion of February 23, 1999 and the Chief Administrative Officer's subsequent instructions on March 2, 1999 for County departments to provide at least two weeks advance notice of their intention to negotiate sole source contracts of \$250,000 or greater.

The Department of Children and Family Services intends to negotiate a sole source contract with Walter R. McDonald and Associates of San Francisco (WRMA) as an Application Service Provider for a web-based, on-line, DCFS need specific community resource database. The database will be known as the web-based Information and Referral System (WIRS), and consists of community providers of various services to which DCFS refers our clients. The competitive solicitation process used in determining that WRMA was the only vendor qualified to perform this service is detailed in the attached sole source documentation.

The State approved our request to implement this system in March 2001. The tentative annual project cost is \$298,195 for the first year and \$189,435 for the second and third years (second year cost is \$91,425 and third year cost is \$89,010). The cost of the services for the three-year term of the Agreement is \$478,630.

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This referral system was **Recommendation 13** in the PriceWaterhouseCoopers Management Audit Final Report of the Department of Children and Family Services, dated November 11, 1998. Your Board instructed the Department to comply with the audit recommendation. Acquisition of this database service will fulfill the requirements of recommendation.

Unless otherwise instructed by your Board, the Department intends to proceed with negotiating a sole source agreement with WRMA and present it to your Board for approval. The Department anticipates filing the Board letter and Agreement during the first week of October 2001.

If you have any objections, questions or need additional information please let me know or your staff may contact Joi Russell, Information Technology Services, Interim Division Chief, at (562) 497-3353.

AMB:JR
PC:gn

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel

SOLE SOURCE DOCUMENTATION FOR THE WEB-BASED INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SYSTEM

1. What is being requested?

An agreement with an Application Service Provider (WRMA) for a web-based, on-line, DCFS need-specific community resource database. The database is known as the Web-based Information and Referral System and consists of community providers of various services to which DCFS refers their clients.

2. Why is the product needed - how will it be used?

On a daily basis, DCFS Social Workers need to refer their clients to various community resources in order to meet case plan goals. Currently, the community resources database that is used by the Department is not readily available to the social work staff in field offices. The current process involves manually searching through a paper directory and calling several agencies to find a suitable service provider. This process is inordinately time consuming and greatly restricts both the quality and accessibility of the required information. This new referral system will give on-line access to all DCFS staff to a database of DCFS-approved providers, will offer the workers the option of printing either driving or public transportation directional maps to the appropriate service facility for a client, and further, will allow DCFS staff to amend the database to more accurately reflect whether a service provider is approved or not approved, available or not available.

This referral system is in response to Recommendation 13 in the PriceWaterhouseCoopers Management Audit of the Department. The Board of Supervisors ordered the Department to comply with the audit recommendations. Acquisition of this database service will fulfill the requirements of Recommendation 13.

3. Is this brand the only one that meets the user's requirements? If so, what is unique about the product?

Walter R. McDonald and Associates (WRMA) was the only vendor that demonstrated a complete ability to meet the needs of the Department as identified in the survey referenced in Question 4 below, namely an easily customizable, comprehensive, web-based community resource database. InfoLine owns the community resources data and has exclusively licensed its use to WRMA for access. WRMA designed InfoLine's existing resource directory database that contains services and service providers that DCFS social workers can use to refer their clients who are in need of specific services. The directory system contains a listing of over 20,000 services and service providers, with a standardized taxonomy or classified system for the retrieval of resource information, specific to the clients needs. It also has an existing browser-based delivery system, obviating the necessity of building that functionality from scratch. WRMA has the sole and exclusive ability to customize the existing system for County use, without extensive programming work that would otherwise be required and would be extremely costly to create.

4. Have other products been considered? If yes, which products/vendors have been considered and how did they fail to meet user's requirements.

DCFS released an information and resource referral survey to attempt to ascertain if there were any local organizations who had an existing system that compiled comprehensive resource information, made it available to the public through an existing web-based interface, and, if so, whether their system could be modified to meet DCFS' specific needs. After obtaining information regarding potential qualifying vendors from the California Alliance of Information and Referral Services and the Information Resource and Referral Network, surveys were mailed to 12 resource referral agencies, as well as a notice being placed on the Office of Small Business (OSB) website and published in the Los Angeles Times. Three agencies responded to the survey. Two of the three respondents did not have the critical technical personnel required to meet the DCFS-specific needs. Each of the responding agencies, except WRMA, required extensive programming efforts and did not have the requisite comprehensive database of services sought after in the